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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews evidence obtained from an analysis of the behavior of 3 to 11 year olds as observed in natural settings in the six culture study and preliminary findings from observing the behavior of mothers and children in a variety of settings in Kenya. The definition of "modern" includes at least three separate indices--the presence of wage earning employment, and formal education, and urban or suburban residence patterns where the urban center is pluralistic in cultural tradition. The work in Kenya suggests that to understand the learning environments which influence behavior of children and the socialization pressures exerted on them, it is necessary to increase the cross cultural sample used to include modern communities. It may well be that without adding these modern communities, curvilinear relations will be mistaken for monotonic ones. Particularly important for understanding U.S. society are the cumulative effect of complexity, nuclearity and formal education in increasing the proportion of seeking behaviors and decreasing that of offering behaviors. These findings cast some doubt on the validity of the stereotype of the association between individualism, achievement and self reliance. They also raise questions as to the relations of values to behavior. (Author/JM)

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# The Effect of Modernization on Socialization

Working in Kenya with people moving at breakneck speed from subsistence agriculture to a wage earning economy has convinced me that we need to add a greater number of modern societies to our cross cultural sample if we are to discover the relation between social structure, maintenance systems, settlement patterns and socialization. Studies have been limited by the Ethnographic Atlas and the HRAF samples which have an underrepresentation of modern communities.

How shall we define modern? Sociologists such as Inkeles have selected industrial employment as the index variable. I would suggest broadening the definition to include at least three separate indices -- the presence of wage earning employment, and formal education, and urban or suburban residence patterns where the urban center is pluralistic in cultural tradition. The scale for wage employment and formal education should include the percentage of the population involved; modernity might require that at least 50% participate.

Using these dimensions scoring high on Murdock's complexity scales (1973) is necessary but not sufficient for being modern. In Murdock's code there is no item which specifically rates the number of wage earning jobs. The highest score on occupational specialization is reached if a society has smithies, potters and weavers. As far as I know there are no formal education codes except for John Herzog's which has not been

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published. As far as I know there is also no settlement pattern code which states whether or not settlements of high density house people of different cultural backgrounds.

My special interest is the effect of ecology, maintenance systems, social structure and settlement patterns on the learning environments of children. Complexity emerged as an important dimension in our analysis of the behavior of children in the six cultures (Whiting and Whiting, in press). Formal education and cultural pluralism have emerged in the cross cultural studies of psychologists such as Bruner et al., 1966; Goodnow, 1969; Cole et al., 1971; Berry, 1971 etc. and in the studies of sociologists, notably Alex Inkeles (1973) and his colleagues and in our present work in Kenya. The association of nuclear households and families with modernization is perhaps less well documented but is accepted by such sociologists as William Goode (1963) and frequently cited by others. Nuclear households emerge as an important variable in our research in Kenya.

Our cross cultural research indicates that all of these variables have an important and in some ways similar effect on the behavior of children (Whiting and Whiting, in press). I would like to review the evidence we have from our analysis of the behavior of 3-11 year olds as observed in natural setting in the six culture study and our preliminary findings from observing the behavior of mothers and children in a variety of setting in Kenya.

Using the complexity scale which includes occupational specialization, a cash economy, a nucleated settlement pattern with specialized buildings, a centralized political and legal system and a priesthood

(see codes of Tatje and Naroll, 1970; Murdock, 1973), we divided the six cultures into two groups -- the simple cultures including the subsistence farmers of Western Kenya, the Mixtecan barrio dwellers of Juxtluhuaca in Oaxaca province, Mexico, and the hamlet dwellers of Tarong on the island of Luzon in the Philippines. The complex group included the families living in Taira in Okinawa, the Khalapur villagers of Uttar Pradesh in India, and the residents of North Village in New England, U.S.A. Children of the simpler societies were observed to be proportionately more helpful to others and were observed to encourage others to perform services and to consider the welfare of members of the family and community. The children of the complex societies scored proportionately lower on these types of behavior and higher on seeking attention and praise and egoistic dominance. The children in the simpler societies were more frequently involved in the subsistence economy and more frequently put in charge of caring for infant siblings. More pressure was exerted on them to be obedient, nurturant and responsible, to act for the benefit of others rather than for egoistic goals alone.

These findings at first seem to contradict those of Barry, Child and Bacon (1959) presented in their paper on "The Relation of Child Training to Subsistence Economy." If one notes, however, that their sample included only one society which could be rated on the Murdock code as complex, there is no discrepancy between their findings and ours. We also find that the pressure to be responsible, nurturant and obedient is high in societies which have herding and agriculture. The interpretation of the findings becomes different, however, when one discovers

that with the addition of more complex societies the distribution of societies high on these variables is curvilinear rather than monotonic such that high accumulation societies who score high on the complexity scale are more similar to the hunters and gatherers. The proportionate decrease in responsible and nurturant behavior is associated with a decrease in the degree to which children are able to or are expected to participate in the subsistence economy. This decreases with occupational specialization and/or with the decrease in the workload of the mother outside the home.

In Kenya the contrast between the rural subsistence economy setting and the urban setting makes the difference in the child's learning environment dramatically clear. Thomas Weisner has been studying a group of families with two households (1973). The men work and live in Nairobi but maintain their homes in Western Kenya, leaving their wives in charge of the farms. The women and children visit the city, sometimes for extended periods. We have been able to observe and record the behavior of the same mothers and children in both settings. In the country the mothers are busy in the gardens, are carrying the water and fuel for the household, and interacting with members of the extended family who live close by. They assign work to their children who spend the hours they are not in school doing chores and caring for infants. They spend little time in the house during the daylight hours, having the run of the homestead which may include the houses and gardens of related families. In the city these same children must spend the day in a 12' x 12' room or in a small earth beaten yard. There is no work which involves food production to make them feel that they are important to

the family. The neighbors are strangers and often speak a different language. The mothers are constantly telling the children to get off the bed, to get out of the house, to stop playing in the trash barrel, to stop going out of the yard, to be careful of automobiles etc. The mothers soon long for their gardens, and report feeling overly dependent on their husbands as they have only his wages to furnish food for the children rather than their own gardens and skill as farmers. Although our quantitative analyses are not completed, preliminary findings indicated that egoistic behavior increases in the urban settings.

Seeking behavior of all types increases. The mothers complain that urban life makes the children more covetous. They are constantly asking for things. Surrounded by strange people and sights they seek information and help. The mothers also display more dependent behavior. They are often dependent on their older children to find their way around the city. I am dubious of Inkeles's generalization that modernization leads to feelings of efficacy (1973). My guess is that he has only measured these feelings in one or two domains and that there are other areas of life in which both urban men and women feel more impotent than they do in the rural setting.

In Kenya modernization is clearly related to an increase in isolated nuclear households. Even in the villages one aspect of modernization has increased the number of households where husband and wife and children sleep and eat together. Traditionally the Kikuyu man was polygynous. Each wife had her own circular, thatched roofed dwelling and her husband either rotated between them or had a hut of his own.

With the coming of tin roofs and rainbarrels -- a modern innovation which may reduce the woman's water carrying duties by several hours a week -- the separate dwellings become incorporated into a simple rectangular structure with a tin roof. There is a correlation between monogamy, nuclear household, and this type of structure. Since men and women claim that polygyny is too expensive in the modern world with school fees an important financial drain, the decrease in polygyny is another aspect of modernization. Polygynists complain that the expense of building two modern houses is prohibitive and that cowives do not do well sharing the same roof. Since a man's prestige is measured in part by the construction of his house all pressures are toward monogamy with the houses preferably constructed of wood, or better yet of stone. In the city of Nairobi the housing furnished by the city council, especially the low cost housing, is designed for nuclear families.

Inkeles has commented that in his studies of modern industrial societies there is a weakening of bonds of the extended family but a strengthening of the ties between the family of procreation (1973). Our findings in the six culture study are related (Whiting and Whiting, in press). There was a dimension of behavior which had as polar extremes what we have labeled intimate-dependent as contrasted with authoritarian-aggressive behavior. The three societies with nuclear households scored proportionately high on the intimate-dependent end of the dimension. Wives reported that their husbands helped them more frequently in child care. There was a value against wife beating and more of a trust relationship between spouses as measured by the presence of men

at childbirth. We interpreted the increased sociability, touching behavior and seeking of help to indicate greater intimacy and interdependence of the adults and children. In contrast in the larger extended households and polygynous homesteads there was need for a more authoritarian type structure; there was more hostility as reflected in the rivalry of cowives in polygynous homesteads and the conflict between generations -- especially mothers and daughters-in-law in extended households.

That aggressive behavior is proportionately higher in extended households may again seem to be in contradiction to earlier reported (see Whiting 1959, Whiting et al. 1966, and Minturn and Lambert 1964). It should be noted that these studies report that socializing agents punish aggression more severely in extended households. Our findings in no way disagree but rather indicate that aggression is more frequent and more of a problem in these households and that the assumption that severe punishment inhibits aggression is not necessarily true. When socializers use physical punishment in their attempt to inhibit aggression they may be unsuccessful in part because they are themselves models of aggressive behavior. In any case the six culture study indicates that nuclear households have children who behave more sociably and intimately with each other and with their parents, they seek help more, and are proportionately less domineering and aggressive. It should be noted that the effect of nuclearity on children's behavior is similar to that of complexity in that it increases dependen cy as defined by seeking help, physical proximity and seeking sociability.(For intercorrelation of these see see Edwards, 1972.)

In the six culture study our dimension of nuclearity had no component of isolation. In Nairobi, or Kenya, on the other hand, and in many modern cities, households are not only nuclear but are isolated in space from relatives and often also from people who speak the same language and share the same cultural traditions. Our observations in Nairobi suggest that this leads to the growth in importance of social networks which are not localized and probably also increases the interdependence of the members of the household.

The last dimension which I am suggesting as a component of modernization is education. Studies which have attempted to measure cognitive styles and processes have found that formal schooling is one of the most important correlates of performance on a variety of tests. Inkeles and associates (1973) have found it the strongest predictor of high scores on their modernization questionnaire. In the six culture study it was not possible to isolate the effect of schooling, but observations made in classrooms suggested that all types of seeking behavior, especially seeking attention and seeking competition were proportionately higher than in other settings. In Kenya our observations in homes which value education indicate that mothers, even when they are illiterate, change their behavior toward school age children. They are more apt, for example, to seek information from them, asking them to identify letters on a printed page, more apt to tolerate questions, and more apt to reward children verbally than mothers who value education less highly and still see their role as that of teaching children to be good farmers and animal husbands. Similar differences have been reported by

Robert LeVine et al. (1967) and Barbara Lloyd in a study of elite parents in Ibadan, Nigeria (1967). It is our preliminary impression that the children of the professional parents whom we have observed in Nairobi boast to each other, seek attention from each other and compete with each other far more than their country cousins. They have a profile which is more similar to the children of Orchard Town.

In sum, our work in Kenya suggests that to understand the learning environments which influence the behavior of children and the socialization pressures exerted on them we should increase our cross cultural sample to include modern communities. It may well be that as with the pressure toward nurturance and responsibility that without adding these modern communities we will mistake curvilinear relations for monotonic ones.

Particularly important for understanding our own society are the cumulative effect of complexity, nuclearity and formal education in increasing the proportion of seeking behaviors and decreasing that of offering behaviors. These findings cast some doubt on the validity of the stereotype of the association between individualism, achievement and self reliance. They also raise questions as to the relations of values to behavior. Kohlberg's individuals in complex societies who are reported to score higher on the moral stages of reasoning and to value the universal rights of individuals (1969) may well behave less nurturantly and responsibly to family and peers than their counterparts in simple traditional societies. Their principaled concern may be for a remote other, rather than for the people with whom they interact daily in face to face encounters.

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